IN THE CLAIMS:

Please consider the claims as they were amended in the Amendment according to article 34 EPC dated March 12, 2001, a copy of which is enclosed. In addition, please amend claims 5, 10, and 12-14 of the amended claims to remove their multiple dependencies. A "marked-up" version of the amended claims is enclosed herewith in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.121 (c)(1). A clean version of all pending claims is also enclosed with this Amendment, for Examiner's convenience, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.121(c)(3).

09936381.122101

~~5. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the steel comprises (in mass %)~~

~~C: 0.25 – 1.05 %;~~

~~Si: ≤ 0.25 %;~~

~~Mn: ≤ 0. 6 %;~~

~~–in that the hot strip (W) after finish rolling in the first cooling phase (t_{CK})of accelerated cooling starting from a temperature above 800 °C, is cooled to a temperature of between 530 and 620 °C;~~

~~–in that the hot strip (W) in the second cooling phase (t_{LK}) of accelerated cooling is cooled to a temperature of less than 500 °C; and~~

~~–in that the hot strip (W) is subsequently coiled.~~

A2

--10. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that between the first cooling phase (t_{CK}) of accelerated cooling and the second cooling phase (t_{LK}) of accelerated cooling the hot strip (W) passes through an intermediate cooling phase (t_{PAUSE}) during which the hot strip (W) is subjected to cooling by exposure to air.

--12. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the first cooling phase (t_{CK}) of accelerated cooling starts at the latest two seconds after the last pass of finish rolling.

09538381 . [illegible]01

A3

--13. (Amended) A method according claim 1, characterized in that at least one of the passes during finish rolling is carried out in the austenitic range below a temperature of Ar3 + 80 °C, and in that an overall pass reduction during finish rolling exceeding 30 % is achieved..

--14. (Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that in the second cooling phase (t_{LK}) of accelerated cooling the hot strip (W) is cooled at a cooling rate of at least 30 °C/s.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

A4

Please delete last line which starts with "Fig. 2 has been provided."